

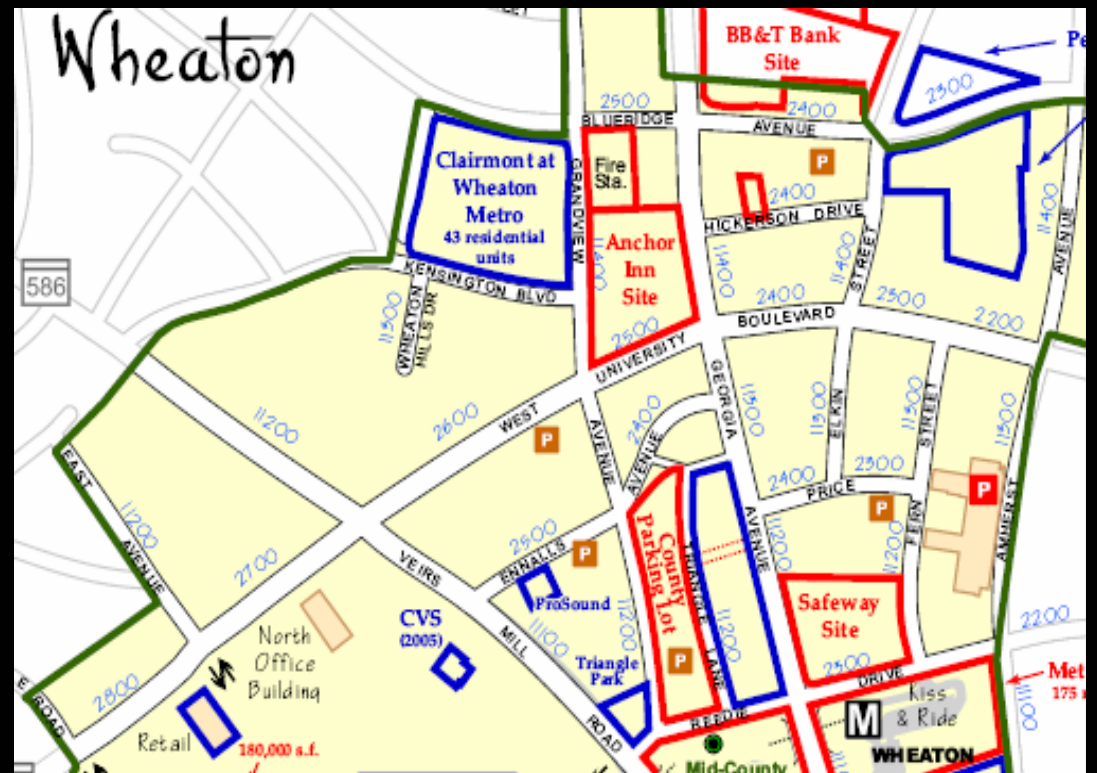
# WHEATON SMALL BUSINESS SURVEY



## **RESULTS & ANALYSIS**

# Survey Parameters

- Within the Wheaton Central Business District
- First floor location
- Limited period for data collection (every- one responds under same external conditions)



# Results

- 188 Surveys were distributed
- 139 Responses were received
- Response rate of 71%!!!

# ?What was Asked?

**Ques. #1 - How long in business?**

**Total # Responding: 139 or 74%**

<b>Years</b>	<b># Responses</b>	<b>% of Total</b>
<b>1- 2</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>12%</b>
<b>3- 5</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>13%</b>
<b>6-10</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>22%</b>
<b>11-15</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>22%</b>
<b>16 +</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>31%</b>
<b>Green = 1<sup>st</sup></b>	<b>Blue = 2<sup>nd</sup></b>	<b>Red = 3<sup>rd</sup></b>

**Ques. # 2 - -How long has your business been in Wheaton?**

Total # responding: 91 OR 68%

Years	# Responses	% of Total
1- 2	16	18%
3- 5	17	19%
6-10	19	21%
11-15	15	16%
15 +	24	26%

### Ques. # 3 - How many years before your lease expires?

Total # Responding: 107 or 77%

Years	Responses	%
1 - 2	32	30%
3 – 5	44	41%
6 or more	31	29%

- 😊 88% want to renew their lease
- 😞 7% will not renew their lease
- 😐 5% are undecided

In 5 years or less, more than **70%** of those responding may be faced with:

The prospect of significantly higher rental expense

**Or**

The prospect of relocating

**Or**

**BOTH!**

**Is your business in this situation? Are you prepared?**

Ques.# 4

How  
is  
Business?

127  
Responses or  
92%

**Great**  
😊!

**16 = 12%**

**Good** 😊

**57 = 45%**

**Fair** 😞

**40 = 32%**

**Having  
Trouble**  
😞 😞

**14 = 11%**

## Question 4 - How's Business?

Response	Years in Wheaton / Years in Business	Business location	Business Type	Question #5 - Concerns
Having Trouble	8 mos. / 3-5 yrs.	University Blvd.	Retail	Rent, business expansion, mall/franchise competition
Having Trouble	3 weeks	Unknown	Food	Parking, rent
Having Trouble	1-2 yrs. / 5 yrs	University Blvd	Food	Parking, rent, business expansion, mall/franchise competition
Having Trouble	6-10 yrs./ 4 yrs.	Georgia Ave.	Service	Rent, business expansion, marketing, parking, safety
Having Trouble	11-15 yrs./ 6 yrs	Unknown	Unknown	Parking
Having Trouble	10 years	Triangle Lane	Personal Services	Foot traffic, rent, crime parking, business expansion, safety



## Question 4 (Continued)

Having Trouble	11-15 yrs./ 6 yrs.	Unknown	Unknown	Parking
Having Trouble	10 years	Triangle Lane	Personal Services	Foot traffic, rent, crime, parking, business expansion, safety
Having Trouble	10 years	Georgia Ave.	Personal Services	Foot traffic - customer base is decreasing
Having Trouble	11 years	Georgia Ave.	Personal Services	Parking
Having Trouble	15 years	Price Ave. ^	Retail	Mall/franchise competition, marketing, foot & vehicle traffic
Having Trouble	16 years	Ennalls Ave	Food	Safety, rent, marketing, vehicle traffic, mall/franchise competition, crime
Having Trouble	16 + years	Georgia Ave.	Retail Sales & Service	Parking, vehicle traffic, trash, loitering
Having Trouble	18 years	Georgia Ave.	Retail	Foot Traffic, rent, parking, crime, internet competition

## Question 4 (Continued)

Response	Years in Wheaton / Years in Business	Business location	Business Type	Question #5 - Concerns
Great	1 year	Georgia Ave.	Personal Services	Safety, rent, marketing, mall/franchise competition, crime
Great	1 year	Georgia Ave	Personal Services	Safety, rent, marketing, mall/franchise competition, crime
Great	1 year	Grandview Ave.	Services - health	Parking
Great	11-15 yrs./6 yrs.	Price Ave.	Personal Services	Parking, rent, marketing, business expansion
Great	6 -10 years	Viers Mill Rd.	Bus./Pers. Services	Safety, parking, vehicle traffic, crime

## Question 4 (Continued)

Great	10 years	Ennalls Ave.	Food	Information not provided
Great	11-15 yrs./ 6 yrs	Ennalls Ave.	Retail	Streetscaping
Great	7 years	Georgia Ave.	Personal Services	Safety, crime
Great	14 years	Grandview Ave.	Personal Services	Parking, safety, rent, crime, vehicle traffic
Great	25 years	Georgia Ave.	Food	Parking, safety, staffing, crime
Great	35 years	Georgia Ave.	Personal Services	Crime
Great	46 years	Georgia Ave.	Food	Crime, safety, loitering, foot traffic, parking

## Question 4 (Continued)

Response	Years in Wheaton / Years in Business	Business location	Business Type	Question #5 - Concerns
Great	11-15 yrs./50+ yrs.	Georgia Ave.	Food	Employee Training, business expansion, vehicle traffic, parking, marketing
Great	55 years	Georgia Ave.	Retail Sales & Service	Crime, safety, foot traffic, rent, staffing
Great	36 years	Grandview Ave.	Personal Services / Retail	Parking, crime, safety
Great	48 years	Triangle Lane	Personal improvement, fitness	Rent, safety, parking, business expansion, marketing

## Observations

- 5 of 12\* “Troubled” Businesses (42%) are situated on Georgia Ave.
- All 5 of these businesses are mature -10 or more years of operation in Wheaton
- 3 are service businesses and 2 are retail establishments – no clear trend by industry type
- Concerns cited (ranked in priority order, high to low):
  1. Parking
  2. Rent
  3. Marketing
  4. Mall Competition, Crime (tie)
  5. Crime
- “Troubled businesses are either very new (<2 Yrs. or mature >10 Yrs.)
- Rent is a prevalent concern among new businesses while crime and safety are prevalent concerns of older businesses. **The concern for parking is prevalent - regardless of business age, type or location**

\* 2 businesses did not report location

## Observations (continued)

- 8 of the 16 “Great” businesses (50%) are located on Georgia Avenue
- Successful businesses are not limited to Georgia Ave. Businesses doing “Great” were located on Grandview Ave., Price Ave., Viers Mill Rd., Ennalls Ave., and Triangle Lane as well
- 10 of these 16 businesses (62%!!) provide services – predominately personal services (beauty, grooming, health, personal improvement, etc.)
- The age of these businesses mirrors those that are “troubled” – either very new (< 1year) or very mature (10 yrs. to 55 yrs.!).
- Concerns cited (ranked in priority order, high to low):
  1. Parking
  2. Safety
  3. Marketing
  4. Four-way tie: Parking, Business Expansion, Mall Competition, Crime
  5. Two-way tie: Crime, Marketing

## Ques. # 5 - What Are Your immediate Business Concerns?

Many Respondents BUT very few who prioritized (ranked concerns from 1 to 5). **Chart below represents the 87 respondents (63%) who ranked their concerns:**

Concern	Responses	%	Concern	Responses	%
<u>Safety</u>	<u>17</u>	<u>20</u>	Permitting	1	1
<u>Rent</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>14</u>	<u>Parking</u>	<u>29</u>	<u>33</u>
Foot Traffic	5	6	Vehicle Traffic	1	1
Marketing	6	7	Competition	2	2
Training	2	2	Crime	12	14

## Top 5 Concerns<sup>1</sup> & Age of Business

Rank	0 - 2 Years	3 - 5 Years	6 – 10 Years	11 – 15 Years	16 + Years
# 1	<b>Parking</b>	<b>Parking</b>	<b>Parking</b>	<b>Safety</b>	<b>Parking</b>
# 2	<b>Safety/ Rent*</b>	<b>Safety</b>	Rent	<b>Parking</b>	<b>Safety</b>
# 3	Marketing	Vehicle Traffic	<b>Safety</b>	<b>Crime</b>	<b>Crime</b>
# 4	<b>Crime</b>	Rent/ Marketing*	<b>Crime</b>	Rent	Foot Traffic
# 5	Foot Traffic	Expansion/ <b>Crime*</b>	Vehicle Traffic Foot Traffic Staffing Marketing*	Vehicle Traffic	Vehicle Traffic
* Denotes tie		1. Relates to prevalence on survey, not absolute rank			



What are the issues that are common to most of the 1<sup>st</sup> floor businesses in the Central Business District (CBD)?

- Safety
- Parking
- Crime
- Vehicle Traffic
- Foot Traffic

How can they be addressed/resolved?

What's the strategy for doing so?

Who will do it? Will you be a part of it?

**Ques. # 6 – What Programs would you like the County to offer?**

**Marketing: 49**

Bookkeeping: 6

Financial: 34

**Streetscaping: 46**

**Storefront Improvements:**

Business Plans: 21

Merchandising: 5

Computer: 24

Lease Negotiations: 31

**67**

**Ques. # 7 - What dates and times would be best for you to attend/participate in County programs/seminars?**

Day	Time			
	8 – 10 AM	11 AM -1 PM	2 – 4 PM	5 -7 PM
<b>Mon. (53)</b>	13	11	<b>14</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Tues. (52)</b>	12	<b>16</b>	11	13
<b>Wed. (51)</b>	13	6	14	<b>18</b>
Thur. (38)	11	5	11	11
Fri. (32)	9	5	9	9
Sat. (13)	4	3	0	6

***Ques. # 8 – Are you aware of the County’s efforts to promote redevelopment in Wheaton?***

**Total # Responding: 128 or 68%**

**YES = 111**

**No = 17**



*Ques. # 9* – How did you learn about the redevelopment in Wheaton?

Total # responding – 169 or 90%		
Type	#	%
Newspaper	39	23
Flyers	59	35
Meetings	28	17
Neighbors	30	18
Other	13	7

***Ques. # 10 – Have you been involved in  
Redevelopment efforts/County Programs?***

**Total # responding – 88 or 64%**

<b>What Kind?</b>	<b># Responses</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>What Kind?</b>	<b># Responses</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Town Meetings</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>Chamber Meetings</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>16</b>
County Seminars	4	4	Steering Committee	7	8
<b>Bi monthly Police Meetings</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>26</b>	Other County Programs	6	7
Other	6	7			

*Ques. # 11 - Will Redevelopment affect your business?*

Total # Respondents – 101 or 73%

Response	Respondents	%
Yes	78	77
No	23	23

How do you think it will affect your business?

Response	# Responding	%
<b>Good</b>	80	87
<b>Bad</b>	12	13

## Ques. # 12 - Do You think you will...

<u>Response</u>	<u># Responding</u>	<u>%</u>
Stay where I am	68	65
Relocate to a similar building	5	5
Relocate to a newer/ modern building	20	19
Move out of Wheaton	11	11



## **Question #13 – Your Comments**

**(in no particular order of priority)**

**What relocation assistance will there be if redevelopment affects business? (County Programs)**

**Need more parking & better access (Parking)**

**Need more customers (Foot Traffic)**

**Police need to patrol more at night (Safety, Crime)**

**Wheaton (the County) needs to consider underground parking (Parking, Planning/Redevelopment)**

**Loitering has a negative impact on businesses (Crime, Safety)**

**Double-parking is a problem (Parking)**

**Need long term parking for employees and customers (Parking)**

**Need cleaner streets (Streetscape)**

**Too much competition from some businesses (Mall / Franchise Competition)**

**Better lighting and patrol of alleys (Safety, Crime)**

**Older buildings are better constructed (Permitting, Fire & Safety?)**

**Business disruption during Redevelopment construction (County Programs / Community Support)**

**County funds for store remodeling (County Programs)**

**People ignore 'No Parking' signs (Parking)**

**A tree in front of my business needs to be trimmed (Streetscape, DPWT?)**

# Summary

- The majority of businesses in Wheaton are doing well. We need to insure that Wheaton businesses continue to prosper through Redevelopment and beyond.
- Wheaton businesses are willing to share their concerns with local/County government ( *THANK YOU!* ).
- The majority of businesses in Wheaton identify and share common concerns:

Parking

Safety/Crime

Vehicle/Foot Traffic

- How do the Wheaton business Community, the citizens of Wheaton and local government work together for, and through, Redevelopment for their mutual benefit?